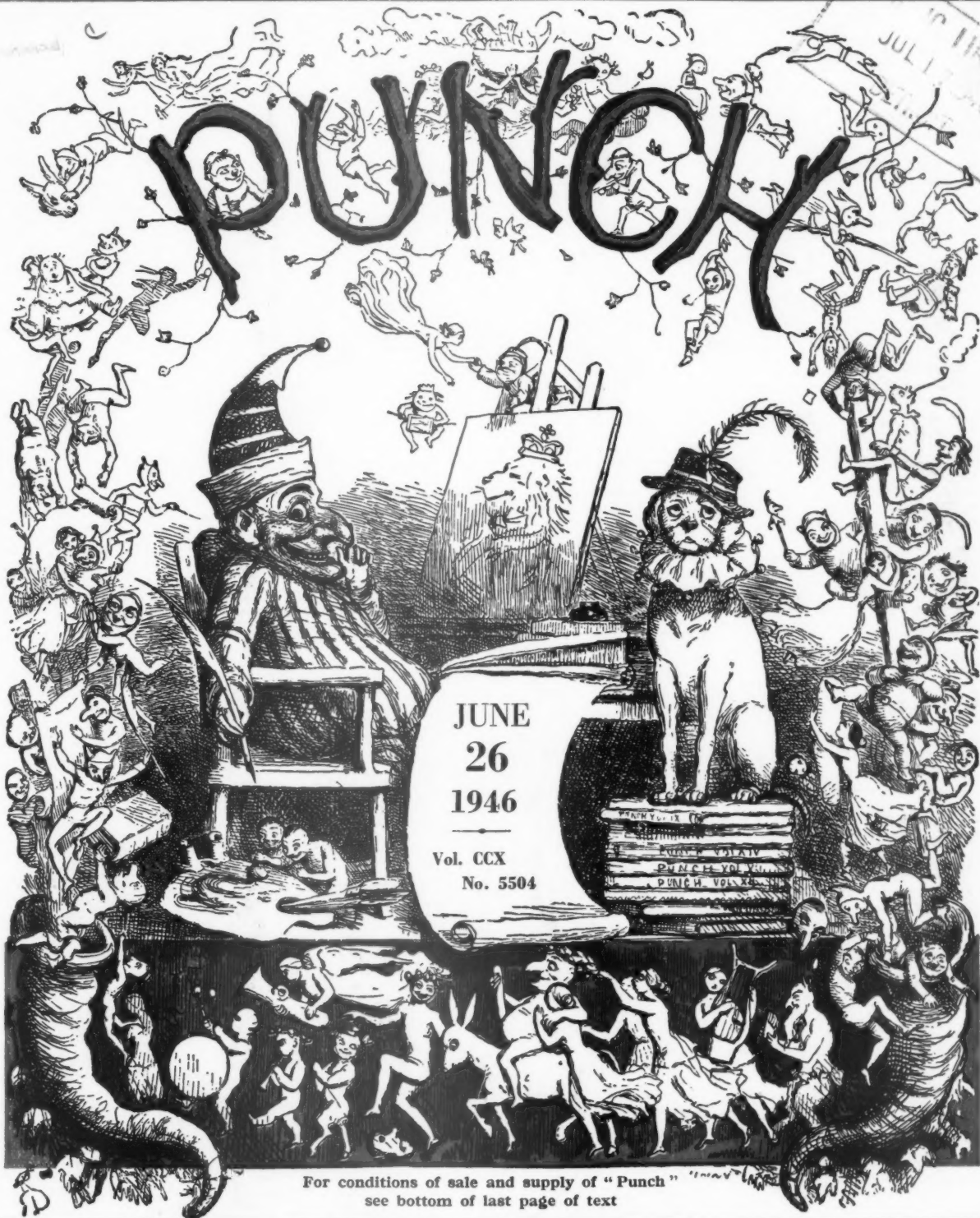


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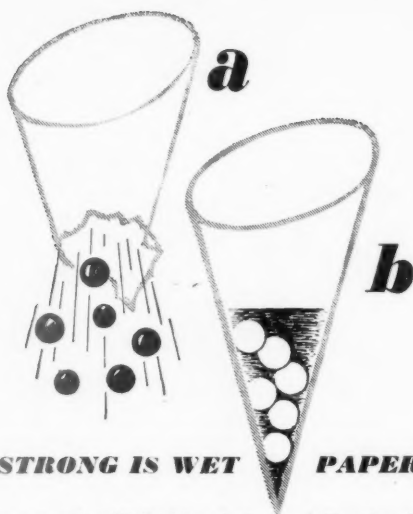


JUNE
26
1946

Vol. CCX
No. 5504

For conditions of sale and supply of "Punch"
see bottom of last page of text

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Regd



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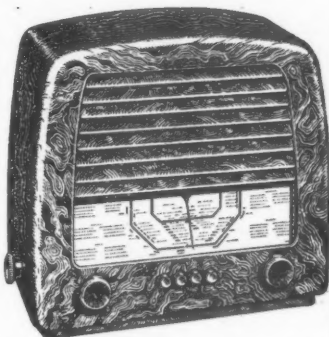


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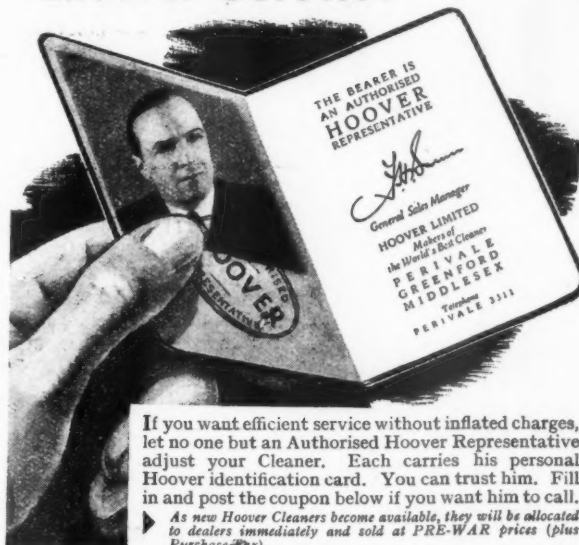
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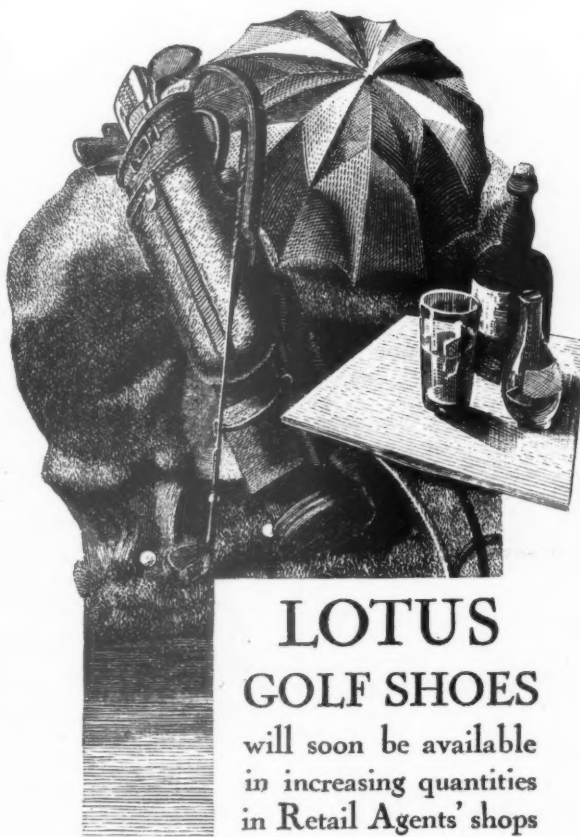
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Will soon be bubbling with good spirits

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IT'S basic, all this talk about filling up. But we're more concerned with the other kind of filling up—tasty meals! You'll be on the right road for this if you always remember the Yorkshire Relish, Thick and Thin. A speedy by-pass to flavour.

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Made by
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Never before have so many frayed sleeves shown so many turned cuffs. Never before were there so many patches on so many pants. And because the country was at war, we accepted it all with good grace. Very soon now, it is hoped, conditions will ease, and we shall be able to indulge our urgent need for something new. When that time comes, 'Celanese' products will be there to contribute an almost forgotten sense of luxury and comfort.

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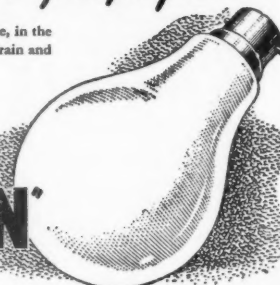
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*but I've got a tin
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added to retain the aroma.

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for gymnasts**



but **Allsorts
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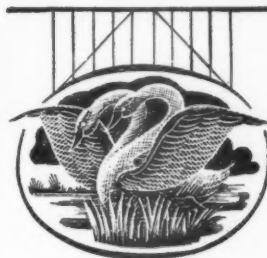
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SWAN WITH TWO NECKS

THE origins of inn-names, like the sign boards themselves, are frequently obscured by time. Thus the "two necks" is likely to be a corruption of the "two nicks" which were cut on the swan's beak to denote that it belonged to the Vintners, and not to the King. This sign, which can be seen outside inns all over the country, is still to-day the crest of the Worshipful Company of Vintners. How faithfully the customs of bygone days are reflected in the tradition of the English inn. So will the days in which we live be mirrored on the sign boards of new inns in the new communities now being planned.

Engraving specially designed by John Farleigh



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Every Jaguar is a full 5-seater car of high performance, luxuriously appointed and with that impeccable finish which for years has been associated with the name of Jaguar. Three saloon models are offered on the 1½, 2½ and 3½ Litre Chassis with many modern refinements. Jaguar Cars Limited, Coventry.

THE FINEST CAR OF ITS CLASS IN THE WORLD

CHAPLINS



CELESTA
FINO
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Per 16/6 Bottle

Supplied to the public through the
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CHAPLINS  **EST'D. 1867**



Serviceman plans for the future

You've thought it all out. You know exactly how you're going to make a fresh start in civil life. The money you've saved, with your gratuity, will give you enough to get things moving and now you're all set, waiting only to be released. But there's one thing you can do *now* which will help you tremendously later on; you can open an account at the Westminster Bank. The possession of a current account will give you a very definite standing in the business world, besides affording complete protection for your capital. And, when the time comes to put your plans into operation, you will find that the Westminster Bank is ready and willing to give you real help and encouragement. Talk it over with any Branch Manager.

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Nigerian Morocco Leather writing case, compact and zipp-fastened. Fitted with fine quality writing pad and envelopes, and complete with every writing requisite, including pockets, loop for fountain pen, and renewable calendar.

In black, wine, green or brown leather.
Size when closed 8 x 6½ inches.

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(OF SOFT DRINKS)

WILL BE RAISED WHEN IDRIS RETURNS



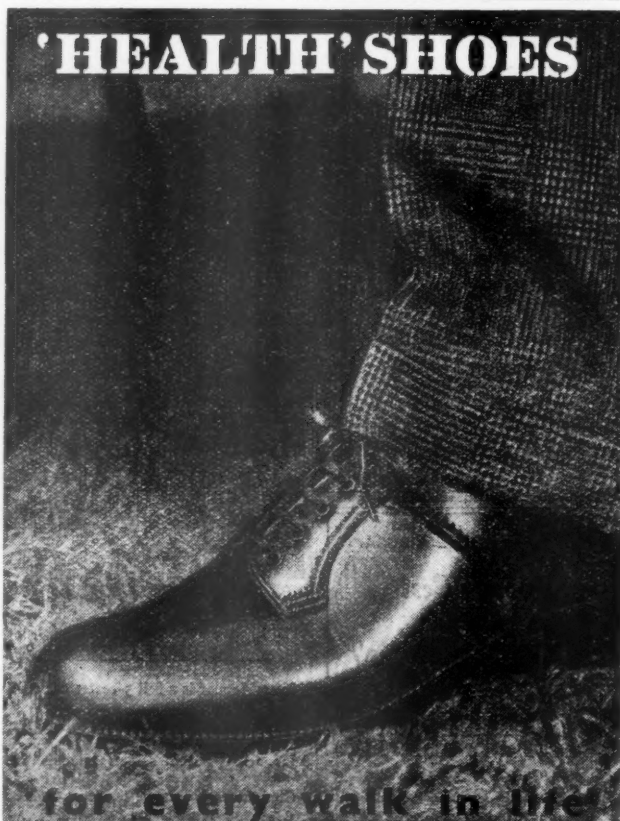
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IDRIS LIMITED, LONDON, MAKERS OF QUALITY
TABLE WATERS THROUGH FIVE SUCCESSIVE REIGNS



'HEALTH' SHOES



for every walk in life

For Ladies' Shoes by Crockett & Jones, Northampton, ask for the 'SWAN' brand
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PUNCH



Or

The London Charivari

Vol. CCX No. 5504

June 26 1946

Charivaria

Sir Walter Womersley recently warned the Government that the people might be driven to revolt. Already reports are coming in of customers being rude to shopkeepers.

"Sport can aid trade recovery," runs an item. There is some talk of stepping up the manufacture of British championship titles for export.

"Rations must not be further reduced if strength is to be maintained," warns a doctor. We have heard an ominous rumour that the official distance between player and dartboard is to be shortened.

Bishop Tightens Belt.

"When the Bishop of London, Dr. Wand, visited Queen's College, Harley-street, W., yesterday, Miss A. M. Kynaston, the principal, said that, in view of the world shortage of food, they were unable to provide visitors with tea."—*Daily Telegraph.*

The Pay-off

"Mr. Novikov, new Russian Ambassador in Washington, presented his creditors to President Truman to-day." *Daily paper.*

Mr. Morrison's prophecy of even worse things in store for us is taken by pessimists as a warning of yet another Cabinet mission to America.

"Pony-skin Coats at Seaside," says a heading. You can take a horse to the water but you can't make it mink.

One result of the recent milk strike in London has apparently been overlooked. Many housewives saved money by not putting it on horses that the milkmen would have tipped.

A correspondent says he recently decided to give up vegetarianism. He got a shock when his butcher explained that meat-rationing could not be made retrospective.

A clergyman says that during the war members of his congregation who had been fire-watching often dropped off to sleep in church. Now he doesn't know what to think.

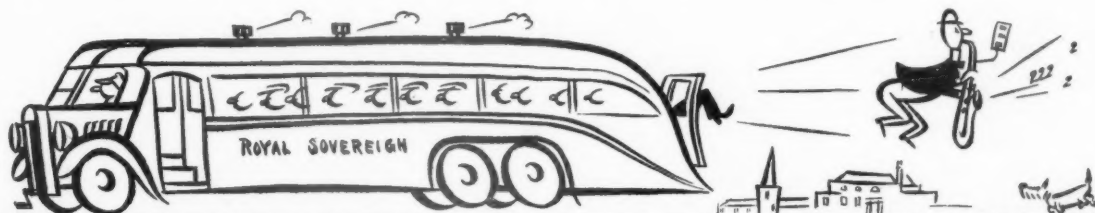
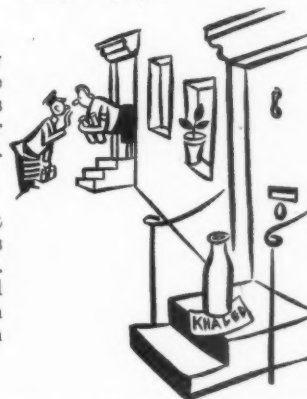
Mr. Bevan has drawn up a five-year plan for housing. Waiting applicants would be well advised to do likewise.

"Owing to the continued inability of her two great parties to agree, the Tripartite Conference on which men of goodwill everywhere placed high hopes has ended, the move to Simla has proved profitless. The eyes which, we wrote a week ago, were uplifted to the hills in cautious expectation of a great event are dashed."

Well, dash my eyes!

Indian paper.

A man who fell out of a charabanc recently is reported to have been playing a saxophone at the time. One theory is that the saxophone blew first.



Vegetable Plot Exposed.

AN unusual incident marked the opening day's play at Wimbledon on Monday. F. Hotpot (France) was about to serve in the first match on the centre court when his opponent, R. Shigatzke, ranked No. 9 in Turkestan, declined to play on the ground that a man in shirt-sleeves was digging up the turf at his end of the court. An appeal was made to the umpire, and it was then noticed that the whole of the space between the tram-lines had been forked over and planted with brussels sprouts or some other form of brassica.

Asked to explain his action, the intruder, who gave his name as W. Bates (Acton), showed no signs of regret. "The country needs more food," he said, "and it won't get it by letting a lot of dratted foreigners scamper about in them white things. Let 'em get on with it on that bit o' grass in the middle till I'm ready for it," he said. "They won't worry me." When it was pointed out to him that the ground was the private property of the All-England Lawn Tennis Club, and that he had no business to be there, he replied that if them what owned a tidy plot of land had no better use for it than to let it out for a game of shuttlecock there was plenty what had. "You got a nice tilth 'ere," he added, turning a spit over in the service court to show them. The man was then removed and play proceeded on No. 2 court.

Groundsmen were alerted all over the country yesterday when, following the discovery of a row of bean-poles at Trent Bridge, an attempt was made to sow onions across the pitch at Old Trafford. The theory that these outrages are part of an organized campaign to grow more food at the expense of sport in this country receives added confirmation from the sensational statement made by the head groundsman of a small county ground in the West-country. "We had been warned to keep a look-out for these fellows," he states, "and shortly after dusk young Ted Mallaby (right-hand medium for the Club and Ground),

who was on watch at the pavilion end, noticed a stranger sneaking about with a hoe near the Players' entrance. Ted whistled the rest of us up, but while we were making a search of the premises about a dozen of them came pouring in at the far end and started work near the Cathedral sight-screen. Double-trenching, too, and a nice bit of manure into the bargain, well trodden down. There's no doubt they mean business. We scared them off, of course, before they had done much damage, but they got all their stuff away, bar the planking they used to get their wheelbarrow over the wall."

County committees are considering what special measures can be taken to meet the menace.

The hope that only summer sports grounds were threatened by the "Grow More Food" crusaders has been shattered by the discovery of runner-beans (believed to be Collinson's Mammoth Early) on the goal-posts at Twickenham. The beans, which had reached a height of only some eighteen inches from the ground, were easily dealt with. Much more serious is the fear, for which there is unfortunately a good deal of foundation, that the whole field has been carefully sown with some form of winter vegetable. A series of parallel scratches across the grass from one touch-line to the other suggests that seed has been lightly drilled in with a hoe, or some similar implement, and afterwards covered to a depth of perhaps half an inch with finely sifted soil. If this surmise is correct it is clearly the work of experienced gardeners.

"We can do nothing at present," said an official of the Rugby Football Union. "If the crop turns out to be carrots we could probably keep it down with the mower in the ordinary way, but any of the heavier-leaved varieties, such as broccoli, would present a very difficult problem." He scouted the idea that the scratches in the ground might have been intended solely to draw attention away from the beans. "More likely the other way round," he said, adding that International matches would definitely be played at Twickenham next season, even if ridging-up had to be resorted to.

The appearance of a rash of spinach on the fairways at St. Andrews has at last impelled the Government to take action. "We are already eating two and a half times as much greenstuff as we were at any time during the last war but one," said Mr. Strachey at Liverpool last night. "The Government has the necessary powers to take over all sports grounds in the country, and will not hesitate to do so, if the national interest demands it. But nothing is to be gained by irresponsible attempts on the part of private enterprise to cover the whole face of the country with cabbages."

This threat of the possible nationalization of sports grounds has thrown the Advisory Board of the M.C.C. into confusion and practically paralysed golf, tennis, polo, croquet and bowls all over Great Britain. It is thought that little further effort will now be made by disheartened committees to resist the encroachment of peas, beans, leeks, celery and other vegetables on their preserves.

Meanwhile, it is understood, special legislation is to be rushed through Parliament to make the carrying of horticultural implements by night a punishable offence.

H. F. E.





THE STUMBLING-BLOCK

"The first thing to do is to get rid of *that*."



"Murder this guy, Slugger, and you'll be a gentleman for life."

Our Good Deed

THERE is only one thing for it. We will write about the weather. For whenever one writes about the weather it changes. We bet you when you read these words it will be a lovely day, and the poor farmers will be praying for rain again. This will be our good deed for the year.

At the moment we are almost suicidal with rain—with rain, with wind, with clouds, and mal-solation.* We have even stopped tapping our three ridiculous barometers. Each tells a different time: but each whizzes up and down insanely, causing spurious hope and incessant rain. We will not look at

their smug faces any more. They are as much use as a racing expert. Let them whizz. Let them point eternally to "Change", where there is no change.

We do not care about the weather any more. We say to ourselves—"It is November. And what a nice mild day!"

Some mornings we draw the curtain and pretend it is a cosy winter's evening, when, of course, no one cares about the weather except the sailor.

As a Thames Conservator, we ought not to care about the weather. For at our last meeting the Chairman was quite gloomy about the water situation. The rainfall was years behind schedule, the natural flow over Teddington Weir

was imperceptible: and the figures he read made us all look glum and pretend we wanted rain. Well, we've got it. Now the Chairman's been knighted; and well he deserves it, bless him*—*but blast his rain!*

For many weeks we consoled ourselves by thinking about the poor farmer. The poor farmer, we understood, wanted rain; and, most unselfishly, we imagined innumerable farmers squelching about in the mud, shouting through the hail in queer bucolic dialects "A nice drop of rain!" and thoroughly enjoying themselves. Somehow this made our sufferings less.

* Or under-sunnery

* Sir Jocelyn Bray

We cheered up. But we never pretend for long that we understand what the poor farmer wants; and how right we are! We repeat to ourselves frequently the classic lines of the poet Haddock:

*"The farmer will never be happy again;
He carries his heart in his boots:
For either the rain is destroying his grain,
Or the drought is destroying his roots."*

Sure enough, they tell us now that the farmer does not want rain any more. We have cheered up again: for now we have a right to be miserable. We can swear about the weather without being snubbed by smug men saying "The farmer wants it," or "The gardener will be glad," or "This will be a great comfort to the fisherman". Between you and us, we do not care if the Thames Conservancy wants it! This weather must stop!

The farmer and the gardener are off our conscience: but now, unselfishness being the dominant note in our character key, we think of practically nothing but the county cricketer. Poor devils! Cold and wet in the cricket-field is bad enough—in a one-day match: but cold and wet in the pavilion—in a THREE-DAY MATCH! Watching the rain from the pavilion: hearing the rain clatter on the tin roof of the pavilion: dodging the drips from the roof of the pavilion—what memories! The pond spreading slowly from the bowler's hole. Taking off the pads—and putting them on again when some ass says it's brightening. Loud nails on the bare wet boards. The ass juggling with cricket-balls, which roll all down the stairs. The innumerable asses who say the farmer wants it. Dashing out at last, all eager to receive a stinging wet catch at short mid-on, and in ten minutes trickling back through the rain to the sad pavilion. How all this can be suffered for *three days* we cannot tell. Dante, surely, had something to say about it; but we have never read his well-known work. And it may be that he did not play cricket in weather like this.

Anyhow, our unselfish heart goes out to the cricketer—one day or three. The black thing about this weather is that the more virtuous your occupation is the more it troubles you. If you are smoking opium in a den, or swilling spirits in a dive, making money in the betting office, or counting it in your miser's vault, you do not notice the blasted rain, you do not see it. A nor-easter or a deluge means practically nothing to a Dago doing the rumba in a dubious night-club. It is the simple

Briton seeking the wholesome joys of the open air, the open road, the open water, who gets it in—and down—the neck. He is the real reason, we think, why cities are so often described as "gay", while country-folk have a name for quietude and even gloom. It is not that town-folk have more cinemas and so on: it is that country-folk can't help noticing the blasted weather!

We, for example, had a slack week this week, almost a holiday. We said that we would spend it at home, healthily pottering at odd jobs in the June sun (Ha!), and avoiding the lures of the wicked city. There were a great many jobs to do. We are not a gardener, but we know two weeds, and we are the Chief Weeder. The boat, and her moorings, have to be—the word, we believe, is now "rehabilitated". There is splicing and whipping and other fascinating rope-work to be done—fascinating, that is, in the sunshine. We meant to remake the old causeway on the foreshore, collecting bricks and stones from many places and assembling them in one. We had to rig a Spanish Burton by which to haul up the garden-stairs from the foreshore, against burglars and small boys. A Spanish Burton is not quite so simple as it looks in the diagrams—not for this job, at least. Perhaps it should never have been a Spanish Burton. Who knows? All we know is that whenever a crisis came in the rigging of the Spanish Burton, whenever we got going on any of these works, all the water, and more than all the water, the Thames Conservancy could ever wish for, fell upon us. And it annoyed us. Anyone who has varnished a dinghy just before a

downpour will know the kind of annoyance we mean. All the works will be done at last: some are done already. The point is that after this healthy week we feel homicidal, anti-Nature, misotheistic, wounded, liverish, and unfraternal. But the men we meet who have been sitting in stuffy offices or swilling gin in the wicked city all the week as usual, are calm, well, and even, for these days, contented. They haven't noticed the weather.

But next week, when they take a holiday, they will; and then, we hope, they will thank us. There—we told you so—one of the barometers says "Change". As if we cared! We are going back to work. A. P. H.

"With"

or Topographical Escapism

WITH Java past all blaming,
With 'Frisco's prospects dead,
With Albany proclaiming
What Fulton left unsaid,

With Stevenage unruly,
While storms of angry croaks
Still falsely (or still truly)
Assail Dumbarton Oaks,

With Westminster's discretion
Enough to make one cry,
With Nuremberg's progression
Plain to the naked eye,

With Casablanca slighted,
With Didcot far from blest,
With Paris not delighted
At all about Trieste,

With Teheran forgotten,
With Yalta half ignored,
With Potsdam wrapped in cotton
And Moscow overboard,

With Bournemouth well concluded
And Simla's end in sight,
With Heathrow's tongue protruded
And Prestwick taking flight—

With each diurnal column
With "withs" so closely packed,
With all the news so solemn,
How were it best to act?

Forsake the cosmic clamour,
The economic gloom,
And join the friends of grammar
En route for Sutton Hoom!

R. M.





"No, darling, you can't have jam, butter AND bread."

Mirage

SHE sat beside me and her presence gave
The placid feeling of the sea's repose,
And when she smiled a pretty little wave
Ebb'd from her neat peninsula of nose.
She sat beside me in a purple pair
Of trousers; we were in the Champs-Élysées;
The waters of the Seine cavorted there
As from a café stole the strains of Bizet.
I was a poet with a profile cast
By Donatello in his finest hour;
The lightest of my utterings would last
When Shakespeare's stuff had turned a trifle sour.

Yes, there she sat, not half a yard from me,
A Grecian goddess in magenta slacks.
We were at Portofino and the sea
Sidled against the yellow fishing smacks.
Trailing across from Santa Margherita,
A tenor's gay concatenated notes
Were woven with the winds so they were sweeter
And seemed to serenade the little boats.
I was a household word of huge repute,
A dapper Dante blessed with Byron's wit.
Round my fair form so snugly sat my suit
Even a grape-skin might have envied it.

Her brow was smooth, her eyes serenely set
Much as I would imagine those of Venus.
She rose and swiftly left me when as yet
No single word or look had passed between us.
I noted from my damp unyielding seat
The water's cap of unbecoming scum
And how an organ in a distant street
Irked with its unrelenting tum-te-tum.
I was a writer of ungainly verse;
My only suit grew shinier and shrank;
I was quite bald, wore spectacles and, worse,
I was in Staines beside a static tank.

Captious Critic

MY friend Bott, of the B.B.C., has not allowed success to go to his head; he still seeks advice about his work from the humble and obscure. "This is just a rough idea of the script as I've worked it out," he said to me the other evening. "How does it strike you?"

I took the slip of paper. "Next in this programme," it said, "we bring you the voice of romance, as Miss Mary Mewl steps forward to sing to the accompaniment of Hot Rogers and his Racketeers that seasonable little melody, 'Summer will be sad this year.'"

"Um," I said.

"You don't sound carried away."

"I should have to know what your interpretation was going to be," I said.

Bott took up his glass, emptied it, smiled winningly and began to speak into it. "Next in this programme——"

"One moment. Doesn't 'next' go without saying?"

"We always say it. I couldn't begin bluntly with 'In this programme,' could I? One tries to avoid the obvious."

"But it's obvious in any case. What programme would they think it was in? Saying 'next' in front of it doesn't give it any more meaning. After all, if you're——"

"Don't overdo it, old man," said Bott. "I quite follow you."

"I'm sorry."

"Not a bit. What about this, then? 'And now——' Oh, damn."

"What's up?"

"Only that it's one of the rules never to begin an announcement with 'And now.' Otherwise you find you're saying nothing but."

"I don't see how 'nothing but' would fit in——"

"Nothing but 'And now,' I mean."

"I see." I consulted the script again. "Why not begin simply at 'We bring you the voice'?"

"All right. 'We——'"

"No, hang on a moment, on second thoughts."

"Now what?"

"My dear Leonard," I said, "you mustn't get testy. If you can't face helpful comment from a boyhood friend you're never going to survive the blow-pipe of Mr. Collie Knox. I was only going to say that I don't care for all this bringing."

"Bringing?"

"Yes. Broadcasters are 'bringing' me things all day and every day nowadays. My flat's full."

"Very witty," said Bott, stiffly. "But it's the fashionable thing at the moment. A new twist. It suggests faithful service without obligation, it implies——"

"I dare say. I don't care for it."

"Then what about 'We give you . . . ?'"

"You don't. It costs me a pound."

Bott winced.

"Here is the voice of romance," he began, and stopped. "Well?"

"Lumpy. Doesn't flow. 'Here is the voice of romance.' The emphases fall unpleasingly."

"Don't say it then. I take it that 'the voice of romance' could go, without offending Miss Mary What-is-it? Would she mind if you——?"

Bott looked outraged.

"Good heavens," he said—"you don't imagine we consult *them*, do you? They do their job and we do ours."

"Then I should leave it out. And start at——"

"Very well. 'Miss Mary Mewl steps forward——'"

"But does she?"

"Actually, no. She's forward already."

"Well, it always used to be 'comes to the microphone,' you know. I thought 'steps forward' rather a refreshing variant."

"But if it's not true . . ."

"Quite," said Bott, gravely. "But she's got to do something."

"What about, 'Miss Mary Mewl now falls on her——'?"

"I'm allowed eleven seconds for this announcement," interrupted Bott uneasily. "You're breaking it right down to nothing."

"That's up to you to decide," I said. "Do the listeners want to hear eleven seconds of Bott, or eleven seconds of Mary Doings and the Hot Thingummies?"

"You go too far sometimes," he said, taking up the glass and assuming a strained grin. "'To the accompaniment of Hot Rogers and his Racketeers, Miss Mary Mewl now sings——'"

"Has the band been announced before?" I asked.

"Of course."

"And in the *Radio Times*?"

"But naturally."

"And the morning and evening papers?"

"No doubt. But——"

"And Miss Mewl is not in the habit of singing unaccompanied?"

"Certainly not. She'd be half an octave sharp after the first eight bars." Bott looked guiltily round my sitting-room. "Forget I said that."

"It's my fault. I demoralize you," I said. "I was only thinking that it doesn't seem necessary to say she's accompanied by——"

Bott gave me a curious look. Then he bent forward and whispered, "*They know where to get gin.*"

"Who do?"

"Band-leaders," said Bott and leaned back, clearing his throat and looking at my chandelier. "In any case, it's usual to mention them in as many announcements as possible."

"Murder in the Cathedral," I said.

"I'm afraid I——"

"The last temptation is the greatest treason; to do the right deed for the wrong reason." Let it pass."

He shrugged and began, "'Miss Mary Sing mewls . . .'" He stopped and bit his lip. "'Miss Mary Mewl sings that seasonable little melody——'"

"Stop!"

"Why?"

"'Seasonable' is dragged in. Who cares whether it's seasonable?"

"It gives a new twist——"

"My foot! I suppose if the song was called 'It's snowing in my heart' you'd want to mention that it was unseasonable—with an apologetic little laugh."

Bott sighed. "All right. But I——"

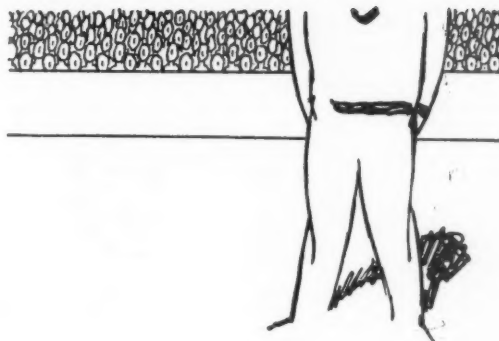
"In any case," I said, "the melody couldn't be seasonable, only the words. And why 'little'? Hasn't the wretched thing got thirty-two bars in it like all the rest of them? And, while we're at it, since the song's title is bound to occur at least six times while she's singing it there's not the least point in including it in the announcement."

He got up and turned down his empty glass; then he took his hat sulkily from the divan and stood there casting about in his mind for a Parthian shot.

"I've a jolly good mind," he muttered at last, "to cut out the announcement altogether."

"It would be a new twist," I said.

J. B. B.



Toungose

"Then, just as the batsman takes a hefty smack at the ball, you get up and fly straight out over the stand: that NEVER fails to deceive the customers."

Ma Dernière Maison

MA dernière maison est sur la colline,
J'aperçois de ma fenêtre le retour au bercail—
Le régiment blanc des iris, la glycine,
Qui orne le portail de son drapeau demi-deuil.

Ma dernière maison est parfumée de pain,
De café moulu, de cirage et de miel,
J'aperçois de ma fenêtre le généreux sein
De la montagne offerte aux inquiétudes du ciel.

Dans ma dernière maison je vis de mes rentes,
De souvenirs dorés, et, accroupie le soir,
Je chauffe à mon foyer ces mains reconnaissantes
De l'héritage sauvé de l'ancien désespoir.



"They're not open yet, old chap."

H. J.'s Belles-Lettres

THIS Belle-Lettre deals mainly with Man in Society, and as a scientist I do not of course restrict this to twirling moustaches round the edge of fans. The term has, indeed, much changed, and now includes things like Republics and the Peckham Health Centre, whereas it used to be restricted to Ascot and the wives of baccarat-players. For most of my space, therefore, I shall be dealing with what is known to sociologists as Sociology, but before so doing I will clear mere etiquette-mongering away.

To lay down directions for every social emergency is impossible. They cannot be committed to memory, and to consult a volume at the dinner-table comes under the prohibition against reading at other people's meals, this having only one exception—when your host has written the book himself. Rules for behaviour as a guest, congratulating peers, etc., always break down by assuming that the members of each category are the same, but of course there are many genes and the like to be thought of, and when you bring permutations and combinations into biology it can be seen that the odds against any two hosts reacting in the same way are very heavy, and more within the ken of astronomers than bookmakers. The manuals never tell you how to behave in homes where finger-bowls are not served—whether to demand that they shall be produced or use the flower vases, or leave the fingers unwashed and perhaps put soup stains on the dessert. Only *en-lout-cas* poise can equip the guest for anything he is likely to meet, this requiring some skilful hypnotism before each social event.

I now turn to the use of the word "Society" to describe all the different kinds of group to which people belong. Those who investigate these have become so numerous that there is a danger of their discovering that everybody else

in some group they are working on is investigating it too. However, the material is inexhaustible. Even those communities most frequently dealt with still provide untitled problems. For example, the Food Habits of Free Traders, Endogamy and the Co-ops, and the Use of Music to Increase Output among Orchestra Operatives. There are a few groupings left which have not been investigated at all—people who have read the same book or been expelled from the same club. I will examine one case in more detail, I forget why. A group much overlooked by those who have not thought of it is all the visitors who occur in the British Museum at the same time; being on much the same spot they must have a unity, but not so complete that it cannot be analysed. At first sight it might appear that they have few interactions, but in popular rooms they get in each other's way and in unpopular rooms they resent each other's intrusion; in fact, the authorities are prepared for interactions and collect their umbrellas at the door. They also have a common urge. Whereas in picture galleries, so thoroughly has the Arts Council done its fell work, most visitors are feeling anxiety lest they be betrayed into injudicious expressions of praise or blame, in a museum the very idea of criticism has occurred to few, and the predominating emotion is a desire to get out, qualified by an ascetic compulsion to reach the exit by the longest route. Some might think this constitutes an embryo General Will.

Students of the subject are apt to shift their angle from time to time. In the old days they had what they called the "human family"—Africans were our brothers and Americans were our cousins, and then there was Old Father Time and Mother Nature and quite a clique of them altogether. But now they think humanity is far too serious to treat like this, and when they refer to it what interests them is whether it will exist at all in a few years. Sociologists have often pointed out that society is disintegrating, and now physicists are helping with this trend. Perhaps atoms may, while removing man, give a jolt to some other form of life and start that evolving like billy-ho, as some people say. Let us hope for its own sake that such by-passes strigils and horse-hair sofas.

Once when I was investigating the spinal reflexes of dance-bands in a club called "The Mare's Parlour" it was raided, and we found ourselves in a number of Black Marias jogging through the deserted streets of Walthamstow. Here, I thought, was yet another community, for though collected fortuitously, we had a short past in common and possibly a long future, and were physically more proximate than the most cohesive tribe, club or family. On my left was a waiter, still carrying a tray of steaming cocoa placed in his hands by the *maître d'hôtel* when the alarm went. On my right was a cabaret artist, who sang roguish songs attired in balloons, which burst with every jerk of the vehicle, making the police outside hope we were exterminating one another, they preferring coroners' courts to police courts as more free and easy. Opposite was a life-size doll, attired as a shepherdess, and arrested as drunk and incapable. Further down was dim and murky, but I could hear through the gloom somebody tuning a saxophone, and two business men selling each other options. To get some good reactions I suddenly said, "Plaster-casts of which three statues would you choose to accompany you to a desert island?" A scholarly voice from the corner said, "Do friezes count?" but apart from this all was hissing breaths and the sudden drop in temperature testified to some clammy sweats as well. Further tests were impracticable as we were rescued by a kind of Scarlet Pimpernel person, who was part of the Inspector of Constabulary's staff at the Home Office.

J

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Ichabod

IF a man has too loud a band he can sack the oboe and fill the double-bass with porridge, but for the man with too loud a suit there is nothing but hollowness of spirit and the bitter, bitter vapours of despair. Ah, pity the man with too loud a suit when that suit is new and shapely and full of nap.

Pity me. There was a light fog over the quarter where my tailor lurks on the day at the beginning of the war when I decided to lay something by in which to face what peace might bring. It wasn't thick enough to make you take your hat off to a lamp-post but it had sufficient kick to turn the atmosphere of my tailor's *salon* a weak mulligatawny.

"Do you remember," I coughed—for everyone was coughing in London that day—"a grey tweed I had in my salad-days with a vague blue nonsense winding through it, like the plan of a canal-system?"

"I've the very thing," he choked. "It's exactly the same cloth, only this time the canals are running with the faintest suspicion of *vin rosé*."

I thought that a very beautiful metaphor, and when it was unrolled I thought it an equally beautiful cloth. It had a sort of Edwardian dignity which reminded me of uncles and Sundays and birthday-teas at Gunter's. The pink was barely noticeable, but when it did impinge it gave you the same mild artistic thrill that you get from an absolutely round fried egg or an El Greco.

When the suit came I was away and it went into store unopened. The difference that suit made to me all through the war was almost beyond belief. There it lay in its tissue paper at the back of my mind, new and exquisite and waiting for me with outstretched arms, and every time I had to defer to an oaf with a bigger moustache than mine or say "Sir" to someone I remembered asleep at the bottom of the Second Form I found comfort in the thought of it.

"Hope, like the glimmering taper's light,
Adorns and cheers the way . . ."

—I won't bore you with the rest of that, for it is already clear that Goldsmith would have understood what a wonderful lifebelt that suit was to me through the dark days.

Well, I know it sounds odd, but things are odd, as everyone knows, and I must ask you to believe that the

day I undid the suit and put it on and went to London in it there was another fog. I was enchanted with the suit, which was every bit as fine as I had pictured it. I was walking down Bond Street just before lunch with a friend who was trying to interest me in the Copernican Theory when the fog lifted and with it every eyebrow in that part of the town. Brutally my friend jettisoned the planets and hustled me into the doorway of a famous *corsetière*.

"You weren't wearing that when we started out?" he demanded.

"I was," I said miserably.

"You can't go about in a diagram of the circulation of the blood."

"I chose it in a fog."

"It looks as if you chose it in an abattoir."

"These awful red trolleybus-routes!" I groaned.

"Empire Free Trade in graph form!"

"Would you call them cochineal?"

"I'd call them crushed ladybird. I'd call them——" But my friend was always an outspoken fellow.

Of course I rang up my tailor from the dark corner of my club where I went to ground and after reproaching him angrily suggested that one of his flashier customers might like the suit, a bookmaker or perhaps some professor

of pure mathematics for whom life had ceased to be anything more than a joke. And of course he replied he had no professor on his books, nor even a bishop, who had fallen off an Alp on his left shoulder in infancy or boasted a warped rib where a cart-horse—but I will not weary you with a schedule of my deformities.

I only want to point out that there is no redress for the quiet man with the loud suit. I have consulted the Woof Sub-Committee of the Working Party on Tweed about the possibility of having my scarlet runners extracted, but they reply that if this were done the suit would inevitably fall into as many pieces as it has lines, or to be exact, they say, one more. I have written a letter to the *Tailor and Cutter* demanding the provision of an instrument to measure the strepitanity of any given pattern of cloth, so that you could say to your tailor, if you had one, which I haven't any more: "With my complexion I can't carry anything that exceeds seventeen international optical decibels." But I have a feeling they won't print it. I have even introduced the suit to an active young moth whom I found lunching on my dinner-jacket, but I shall be mighty surprised if he takes advantage of it. Life doesn't work out that way.

ERIC.



"I'm sorry, sir—we haven't a ball of any description in the shop."



"Do you happen to have a Saturday afternoon—nice and sunny, light variable winds, cool towards evening, about the middle of July?"

The Cricceter

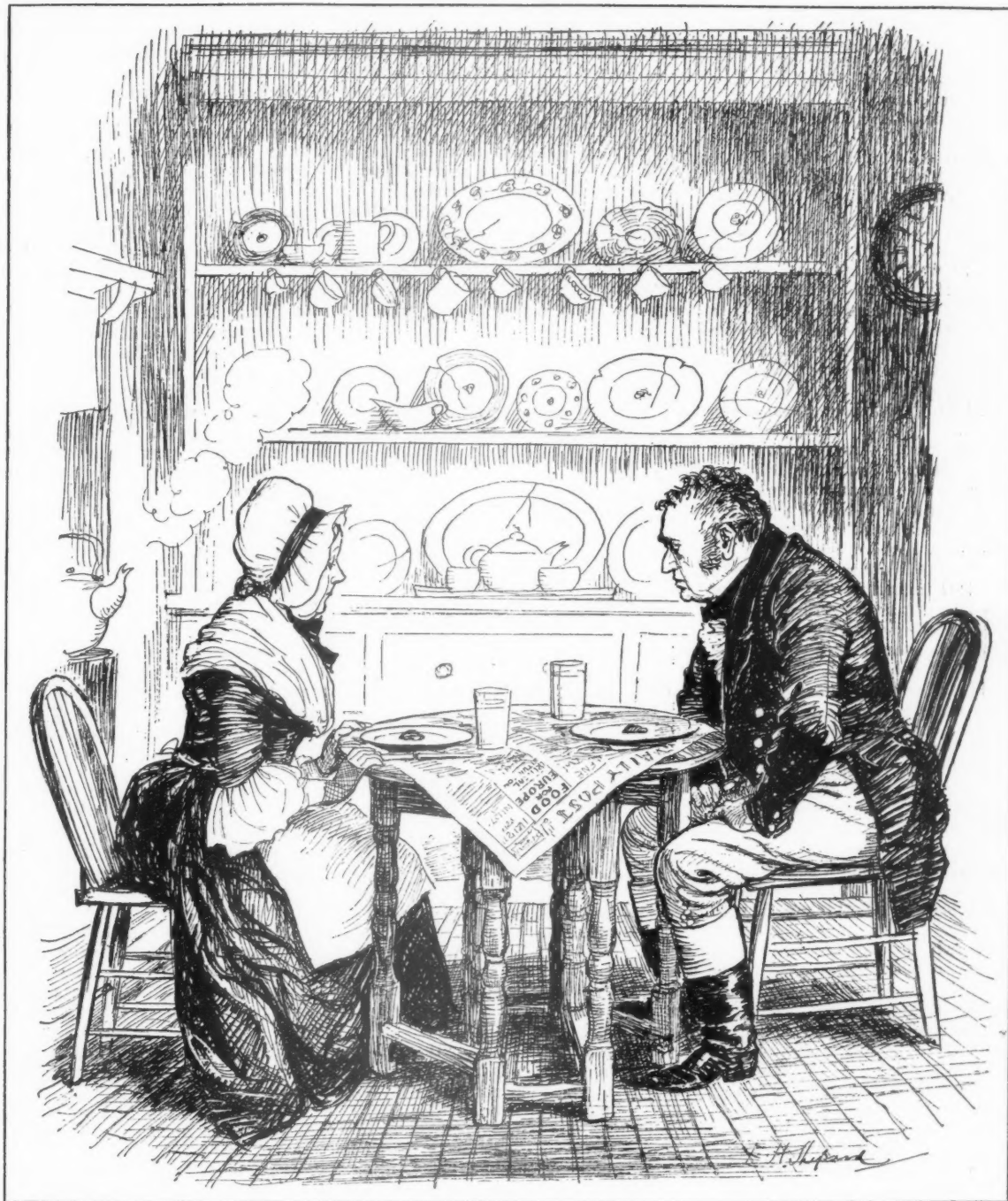
WITH us ther rood a cricceter with-alle
That hadde longe y-go at batte and balle.
From heed to toon he was y-clad in whyte,
Lyk any gooste up-on Allhallown nihte;
Of bokke were his botes and his grieves,
And tukked faste at el-bowe were his sleeves.
I seigh his cappe y-tilted atte brimme,
And therwith-al he wolde his eyen dimme
Ageyn the sonne, that shoon as any fyre.
Certes, he was the fynest of a shire;
And as a berye were his armes broune.
At Lordes hadde he pleyed and Kenyng toun
Ageyn the men of Ostral and of Inde.
Ful many a lusty felaw maystow finde
To smiten hearde at any chaunce or happe,
And yet this battere sette hem aller cappe.

* "In the country."

Of brekes and googlen coude he al the lore;
In pleying swerves nas him non bi-fore.
Whan at the stompes he had take stonde
The feeldes-men were sparsed up-on londe*
To cacchen ferre, and stoppen everich chaunce;
It were not saufe, it miht nat avaunce
To feelde at sely pointe, wey-la-wey;
Was al hir lust that he sholde make an ey.†
But whan the trondler bowled gentil lobbes,
Than was he riht a Wollye or a Hobbes;
Or if he sente doune a longe hoppe
So sore he smoot that nan ne mihte it stoppe.
Of wilwe was his cricce,‡ soth to telle,
And rounded was the blade lyk a belle.
He was a god felaw, by oon assente;
And Frank he highte; his wonyng was in Kente.

† Egg.

‡ Bat.



THE POOR MAN'S TABLE

"J. B. Sprat gave up his fat,
His wife gave up her lean;
And so, betwixt them both, you see,
They kept their conscience clean."

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Tuesday, June 18th.—House of Commons: Food Feud.

House of Lords: Coal Revolt.

Wednesday, June 19th.—House of Commons: Footnote to the Budget.

Thursday, June 20th.—House of Commons: Trouble in the Middle East.

Tuesday, June 18th.—Back from Bournemouth, where not all the "breezes" were to be found on the sea front, Mr. EMANUEL SHINWELL reopened the Parliamentary session in a rather take-it-or-leave-it mood. Maybe the Fuel Minister found the air of Bournemouth too relaxing, for he gave the impression that he was not prepared to argue with anyone about anything.

Judging by the number of anxious queries about petrol-rationing awaiting his return it was a matter for speculation whether or not the Whitsuntide recess had eaten into the basic reserves of some hon. Members.

Sir THOMAS MOORE tried nobly to rouse the Minister from his lethargy with this mathematical proposal which must have occupied most of his spare time in the holiday: "As it is estimated that one tanker holds enough petrol to run a 12 h.p. car 80,000,000 miles, is it not time that you increased the present miserable petrol ration?"

As Mr. SHINWELL had spent part of his vacation in trying to work out how many Polish miners it takes to guarantee a British miner a five-day week he found this one too much for him. "Your arithmetic may be unimpeachable," he acknowledged gracefully, "but like the flowers that bloom in the spring it has nothing to do with the case."

After which one or two other Members opposite suffered minor Ministerial rebuffs. Sir WALDRON SMITHERS, after a "crack" from Mr. GEORGE ISAACS, brought down the House with the plaintive plea: "On a point of order, sir, may I resent that?"

The biggest "brickbat" of the day came from Mr. GEORGE BUCHANAN, the brightest Ministerial "wit" that ever came south of the border. Called upon by the deep booming voice of Mr. CHARLES WILLIAMS to explain why 20,000,000 bricks had been "exported" from England to Scotland, he retorted: "The answer is a simple one. The English are a simple, kindly, generous people"—which promptly silenced any possible criticism from Mr. WILLIAMS, speaking on behalf of the kindly, generous people of Torquay.

By this time Ministers and Members were well on the way to making the morrow's *Hansard* look like the blotting-pad on the Chancellor's desk on the eve of the Budget. Seldom have so many "noughts" appeared in such a swarm.

Mr. JACK LAWSON, the War Minister, casually told Members, apropos of very little, that he was not aware of any shortage of writing paper in the Middle East as he had in the last three months shipped 14,000,000 envelopes and 468,000 writing-pads to the troops there.

The Chancellor himself tossed an odd 250,000,000 Swiss francs into the discussion, being the part-value of gold

farmers to sow another 500,000 acres of wheat for the coming harvest.

Neither past nor present Minister, united in war but divided in peace, pulled their punches in a hard-hitting battle that has yet to be won on the wheat-fields of Britain.

It was a gloomy prospect for the winter months that Mr. HUDSON conjured up for Members and housewives—less milk, less bacon, fewer eggs. He prophesied a fall in milk production of 100,000,000 gallons.

As if to convince those who criticized him at the Bournemouth party conference for not being sufficiently Socialist in his farming policy, Mr. WILLIAMS bravely sported the brightest of bright-red bow ties on his wing collar—a gesture that softened the hard hearts of Labour critics, and one that did not pass unnoticed by his antagonist opposite. Mr. HUDSON, in fact, said he welcomed the substitute for a white sheet in which the Minister had appeared before the House.

At the end of a not very illuminating debate the Opposition failed to reduce the Minister's salary by the traditional £10 as a token of censure, the Government securing a sound, if uneasy, victory by 284 votes to 157.

In the House of Lords the Government was taken by surprise when a two-to-one majority approved an amendment to the Coal Nationalization Bill providing safeguards against any discrimination in favour of a particular type of consumer.

Wednesday, June 19th.—The "silly season" appeared to have opened a month earlier than usual when Major H. R. SPENCE demanded to know from Mr. IVOR THOMAS, of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, how long it would take to get from Union Street, Aberdeen, to Piccadilly Circus.

Members were tempted to ask why, if one wanted to get to Piccadilly Circus, one should start from Union Street, Aberdeen. Mr. W. GALLACHER did ask quite bluntly why the Major from Aberdeen wanted to go to Piccadilly Circus, and when a reply was not forthcoming Members echoed "Answer, answer, answer."

But the Major's question, apparently, was a serious question calling for a serious answer, and Mr. THOMAS informed him that the "door-to-door" time would be five hours—by air and road from the air terminals of course.

A more practical query came from Air-Commodore HARVEY, who wanted to know whether the weather forecasters could not be persuaded to give more accurate warnings of the approach of other than political deep depressions.



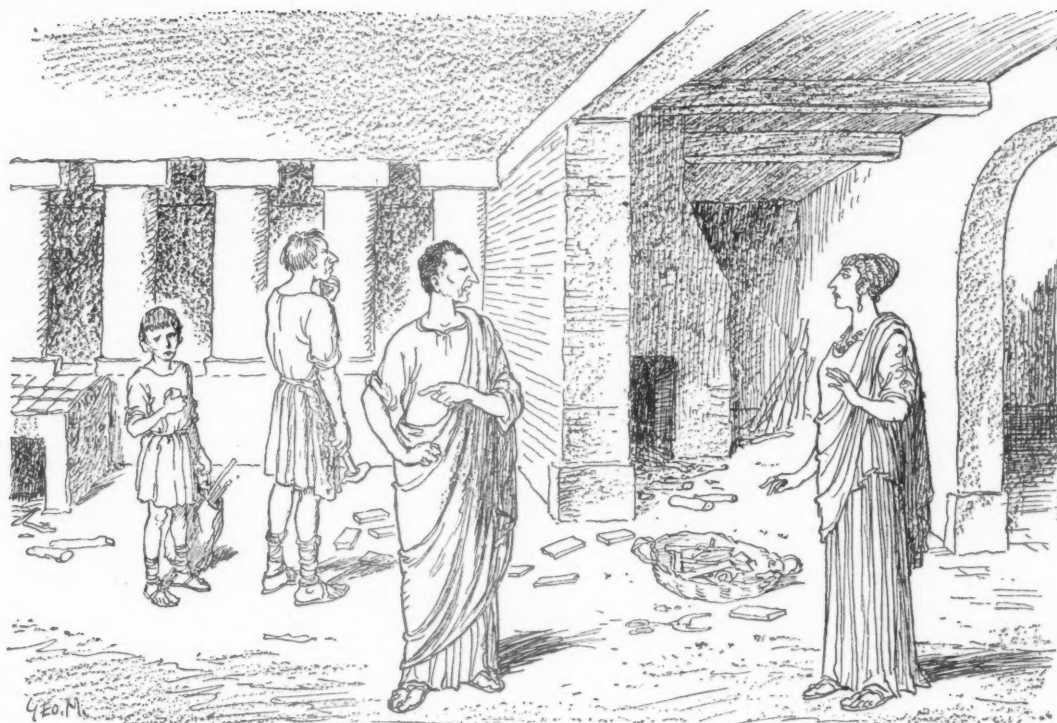
"UNDER THE HAYCOCK, FAST ASLEEP"

The Minister of Agriculture as seen by Mr. Hudson.

looted by the Germans, transferred across the Alps, and now credited to the Allies.

Even the Prime Minister thought in rows of noughts if not medals when he turned down a suggestion that the Home Guard should be entitled to the War Medal, on the grounds that once he opened the door of eligibility millions more would flock through it clamouring for recognition. There was a danger, he said, of the whole thing becoming a complete absurdity.

And so it went on into the more serious realms of the debate on food production in which Mr. ROBERT HUDSON, ex-Minister of Agriculture, censured his former aide-de-camp, Mr. TOM WILLIAMS, for not ordering



"I knew we'd have trouble with the hypocraust—he says he has to go back to Gaul for his perforaculum."

"On V Day," he complained, "the public was completely misled, and it is getting worse every week." Something should be done about it, he demanded.

All that Mr. DE FREITAS, Under-Secretary for Air, could promise was a bigger meteorological service than before the war. He raised no hopes that the weather experts would warn Members in sufficient time of the approach of Britain's annual day of summer. Nor would he subscribe to a suggestion from Lieutenant W. SHEPHERD that the paraphernalia of that extensive and somewhat unreliable service should be abandoned in favour of the employment of a few aged farmers to tell what the weather would be.

More heartening was the news from Mr. J. W. BELCHER, of the Board of Trade, that the clothing ration was to be increased to thirty coupons for the seven-months period from August 1st, and that men demobilized between June and December of last year would get a further twenty-six coupons next

November because so many of them had grown out of their pre-service "civvies."

The Prime Minister's only contribution of the day was an announcement that Armistice Day for the first World War would become a joint Remembrance Day for the two World Wars to be held on a Sunday—this year on November 10th.

Members then proceeded to the annual task of attempting to get blood out of a stone—or small concessions from the Treasury as addenda to the taxation reliefs promised in the Budget.

Thursday, June 20th.—Mr. CHUTER EDE, the Home Secretary, adopted a familiar judicial rôle in asking: "What is a political party?" He had been asking himself that question when considering whether or not political parties should be called upon to publish annual financial accounts, but he admitted that one of his big difficulties had been to define a political party.

On reflection hon. Members found that it was not as easy as it looked, and

no one offered to come to the Minister's help.

The House was later preoccupied with serious news from the Middle East. The Prime Minister announced that the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem had sought sanctuary with King Farouk of Egypt and that consultations were going on with the Egyptian Premier to see what could be done about it.

The War Minister, Mr. LAWSON, also gave a disturbing account of the kidnapping of British officers by Jewish terrorists in Palestine, and pleaded with Members to say nothing that might imperil their lives. He paid a tribute—readily acknowledged by the whole House—to the remarkable restraint shown by British troops in trying circumstances.

Old Joke

"He spent some months touring England, Scotland and Wales, visiting munition works, sausage factories and secret industrial plants where the people had no idea what they were making."—*Evening paper.*

At the Play

"GRAND NATIONAL NIGHT" (APOLLO)

SOONER or later in nearly every crime play the hard-pressed author is obliged to accept a *bisque*. The village constable sneezes while the stiletto with which Uncle Cuthbert has been filleted is flung into the moat, he buries his face among the goldfish when the Sten gun drops out of Aunt Wisteria's work-bag. We do not complain, so long as the author puts his privilege to good use and gives us honest excitement. This Miss DOROTHY CHRISTIE and Mr. CAMPBELL CHRISTIE most certainly do, but it is my duty to point out that the two *bisques* they take are rather fat ones. An extremely intelligent inspector forgets all about finger-prints in the vital identification of a hand-mirror and, odder still, takes no trouble to identify a garment which contains the clue on which he proposes to base his charge.

Otherwise their play is put together with singular cunning, and its characters are an amusing set of people instead of the smart mechanical puppets with which so many of our stage death-wrights are content. Gerald Coates (Mr. LESLIE BANKS), a ship-owner, believes he has murdered his dipsomaniac wife when he hits her in self-defence, so he carries her body from his study to her car and later abandons it in a side street in Liverpool. As she has already stood drinks to half the citizens of that town during the evening it is a reasonable assumption that she has been killed for what remains of her Aintree winnings, and Gerald decides to stick to his pretence of innocence, even when the post-mortem shows her to have died of heart-failure, for he has no wish to risk prison now that he is at last a free man and his Joyce (Miss OLGA EDWARDES) is waiting for him. It seems a piece of cake, but nothing is a piece of cake with Inspector Ayling (Mr. CAMPBELL COPELIN) on the job, cruelly alert and horribly suspicious.

In our heart of hearts we know that

the future of a good man in love with a good girl is unassailable, but what with the Inspector and one thing and another there comes a time when it doesn't look better than about eight feet by six. We cannot see what the authors can do for him, and our anxiety is stepped up by very neat contrivance until at length *bisque* No. 2 is played with great effect and the law is defeated. Whether so persistent a policeman would have been thus fobbed off for ever is a question which is neither charitable nor pertinent. But for a slight sag in

contribute handsomely, while Miss EDWARDES is a bright beacon shining through the clue-laden mists of detection.

"GREEN LAUGHTER" (COMEDY)

This is a triangle drama of curious shape, by Miss ROSE SIMON KOHN. It is written not without skill and provides Miss SONIA DRESDEL with opportunities for a clever demonstration of emotional *hara-kiri*, but since two of its trio are unconvincing characters and its situation is quite artificial I cannot give it very high marks.

Granted that an art-expert whose ego has been trodden on in childhood might marry a dowdy young woman because he believes her to have inherited some valuable pictures, and that he might behave badly when he discovers his mistake; but not that he would settle down to six months' intensive sadism in revenge, nor that the girl, having dumbly stood for this, would then be driven out by his taunts on to the streets and there land at her first cast an uncouth but high-minded ex-G.I. whose encouragement would transform her in a matter of days from a repressed Victorian governess into a dainty creature scintillating with the poise and polish of all the finishing-schools from Ouchy to Territet. Even in normal times neither of them would have had the slightest notion of where to find such dresses, much less of how they should be worn.

The third act is the best, for it contains the good idea of the brutal husband falling in love with his despised wife after her transformation, but however the end had turned out one would not have greatly cared, such is the unreality of the piece.

I see little point in plays of emotion which fail to churn us up or else busy us mentally, but those who disagree, and they are many, may like this. Miss DRESDEL makes the most of a well-prepared wicket, Mr. ANTHONY HAWTREY doesn't spare himself to present a very unpleasant character, and Mr. JOHN SWEET as the young American is a newcomer of unconventional promise. ERIC.



A KITTEN OUT OF THE BAG

Gerald Coates Mr. LESLIE BANKS
Detective-Inspector Ayling Mr. CAMPBELL COPELIN
Pinkie Collins Miss HERMIONE BADDELEY

the middle the piece is consistently entertaining, and it is charmingly acted. It should make an excellent film.

Mr. BANKS is a winner all the way, and Miss HERMIONE BADDELEY brings off a good double as both the victim and her sister, the latter a brilliant sketch of a blowsy warm-hearted publican. Mr. COPELIN's sleuth, Mr. CHARLES GROVES' delightful old butler whose exquisite stonewalling does much to save his master, Mr. ARCHIBALD BATTY's Wooster variant, Mr. FREDERICK LLOYD'S Dickensian solicitor and Mr. VINCENT HOLMAN's rustic police-sergeant all

Shallow Inflation Moving North

THERE it was, a nasty dirty cyclone with an ungovernable temper, hovering about over France and the French and showing no more interest in the Victory celebrations than the Russians. Who'd have thought that the thing would suddenly dash north at more than cyclonic speed, empty its slops over the Mall and Lord's, and disgrace the meteorologists?

Well, as a sort of self-appointed bureau of economic intelligence I am quite determined not to be caught out in the same way. I shall issue bulletins at regular intervals and these will hide absolutely nothing about the threat of inflation. Bulletin No. 1 follows here:

"A particularly vicious spiral of inflation is centred over East-Central Europe and is moving slowly north-west. Prices will be fair at first, but will gradually become unsettled. The outlook for Money is about the same. A secondary inflation is developing across the Atlantic, while a hire-purchase system of considerable magnitude is moving millions.

"Further Outlook: Prices variable in all districts with some strain at times. Queues moderate to fresh or very fresh, backing later."

And to this I append three field reports from my observers.

1. Oxford Street, 10.30 a.m.

During a rush-hour for shoppers I stood outside the store of a very temporary furrier. The window contained a hideous collection of second-hand merchandise ticketed at monstrous prices. Three times (at half-hour intervals) I saw an assistant climb into the window and chalk up new prices on the exhibits. On each occasion there was an advance of one guinea all round. I formed the impression that the object of this move was to create an illusion of feverish inflation. I saw several women rush into the shop after the second movement of prices and emerge shortly afterwards heavily befurred. From all this I conclude that though a genuine inflation is not yet upon us, certain sections of the public are quite prepared for it.

2. Petty France, S.W.1, 3.30 p.m.

At the end of a short ride by taxi I gave the cabby a coin of small denomination as a *pourboire*. The man looked hard at the coin and then climbed out of his seat.

"Well, guv.," he said, "you got a real bargain, you 'ave, an' no mistake."

I was very puzzled and said so.

"Runs a fair treat, she does, and as easy on the juice as they make 'em. I 'ardly like to let 'er go, you know. You get so attached."

"Are you trying to be . . .?" I said sternly.

The man feigned astonishment.

"Well, guv., if you ain't bought 'er," he said, "what the 'ell you throwin' your money about for?"

From this unusual and unpleasant incident I conclude that money is rapidly losing its value and that class distinctions have more than broken down.

3. Great Portland Street.

Six months ago I put my name down at a motor-dealer's for a new Torpid 14-horse Saloon, and like a fool I paid in advance. Every time I ring up to

find out about the delivery date I get a different answer. In chronological sequence the replies to date have been:

"Yes, sir, we're expecting your Torpid Fourteen in February at the latest."

"Well, no, sir, your Torpid Twelve won't be ready until early March."

"Any time, now, sir. The Torpid Eight is coming off the assembly-line very fast, I hear."

"I think I can promise delivery of your Capstan Seven, sir, by early next week."

"Will you call in next month, sir, and I'll hand over your Sunbake Six."

"Oh, by the way, sir, you *do* want the side-car model, don't you?"

When I *do* get it I suppose I shall still be able to offer it in part exchange for a bicycle. Hod.





"Mind you, the courtesy you get in the rush hour is of an altogether rougher and more forceful type."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Post-Diluvian America

JEFFERSON, perhaps the most far-sighted of America's Presidents, coupled his plea for isolationism with the demand for a predominantly agricultural U.S.A. The ability to feed yourself and to market your goods at home was recognized as a basic condition of being allowed to live your own life; and for the greater part of the nineteenth century agrarianism and independence went hand in hand. When industrialism got going every able worker felt he had a fair chance of becoming a boss; so trade-unionism, as perpetuating the proletarian status, held out few attractions. But Big Business frustrated personal effort; and it is with Wall Street and "rugged individualism," alike discredited by the slump, that Professor DAVID MITRANY brings his country's political history up to date in *American Interpretations* (CONTACT PUBLICATIONS, 6/-). Any inadequacy in his four essays—"The New Deal," "The Rise of Organized Labour," "The United States and the Western Hemisphere" and "American Opinion and Foreign Policy"—arises, one feels, from a lack of interest in the nuances of civilization which tends equally to obscure the original North American ("flying from the depravations of Europe") and the present-day South American to whom European contacts are valuable. Within his limits Professor MITRANY is admirably informative and fair; and no one interested in Anglo-American relations can afford to disregard him.

H. P. E.

Oscar Wilde

When Mr. HESKETH PEARSON mentioned to Bernard Shaw that he proposed to write on Wilde, Mr. Shaw advised him not to, on the ground that Sherard, Frank Harris,

Alfred Douglas and Arthur Ransome had between them said all that there was to say. Mr. PEARSON replied that the biographies of Wilde had paid far too much attention to his downfall and far too little to his delightful personality, and that the time had come to take him out of the fog of pathology into the light of comedy, and to revive the conversationalist, not the convict. His *Life of Oscar Wilde* (METHUEN, 16/-) contains the first clear and complete account of Wilde's career. The trial and the unhappy closing years are narrated fairly and fully. But the emphasis of the book is on what was unique in Wilde, his inexhaustible humour and his wonderful charm. It was not only in the drawing-rooms of the West End that Wilde exercised his curious powers of fascination. He was equally at home with the miners and cowboys of the Western States. "That fellow is some art guy," a cowboy told Sir Frank Benson, "but he can drink any of us under the table and afterwards carry us home two at a time." Wilde often misused his charm, but it sometimes expressed an extraordinary power of sympathy, which enabled him on one occasion to cure a friend's toothache merely by making him laugh, and on another occasion to dissipate the despair of a woman who had lost her husband. H. K.

Flowers Bred in Britain

Among the many arts that compulsory education and the diverted interests of the educated have deleted, the British artisan's skill in flower-breeding must be reckoned one of the most to be lamented. It may come as a surprise to readers of *British Garden Flowers* (COLLINS, 4/6) to discover that such exquisite blossoms as striped tulips, laced pinks, picotee carnations and double auriculas were bred to perfection by the weavers of Manchester, Paisley and Norwich; that the last-named had a Florists' Feast in 1637; and that the great Loudon could say, only a century back, that you never saw "a fine blow" of an auricula in the gardens of the gentry. All contributions to British flower-breeding are, however, handsomely acknowledged in Mr. GEORGE M. TAYLOR's expert and engrossing pages. He is a notable Scottish plant-raiser himself; and tells you in detail how he produced a golden-yellow sweet-pea, whose progeny, alas, proved sterile. He deplores much of our modern tastelessness and the good things we have lost; though actually some of the latter are only round the corner. Many double primroses, for instance, now, one gathers, unobtainable in England, are grown in Eire. His illustrations—from engravings, lithographs and water-colours, old and new—are as excellent as his text.

H. P. E.

Nineteenth-Century Pointers

Having bidden us note that history does not really repeat itself though it very often gives that impression, Mr. HAROLD NICOLSON in almost every page of his latest essay on European foreign policy proceeds to disclose at least a close superficial resemblance between the state of affairs prevailing while a tangle of cross-conflicting ideals and ambitions was being unravelled in the days of Napoleon's decline and the circumstances of our own uneasy times. *The Congress of Vienna, A Study in Allied Unity 1812-1822* (CONSTABLE, 18/-), is a good deal livelier than its title suggests, for the writer prefers something more full-blooded than the text of innumerable agreements, enacted or abortive, miserably copied out endless times by overworked clerks unprovided with modern office equipment, and he does not disdain to introduce along with the story of years of argument either sharp-edged reminders of the imminence of armed force just beyond the council

chamber or pungent comment on the intrigues, jealousies, festivities and sheer childishness that occupied three quarters of the attention of the embattled diplomatists. It is the very great merit of Mr. NICOLSON's work that he can produce from so much material an account that is coherent and not over-simplified. He shows us—and the showing is important—the main conception of agreement by international conference originated, developed, debased and abandoned at a time remote enough from our own for it to be judged in perspective. His principal deduction is that statesmen should think less of the danger of old Napoleons returning, more of the possibility of new Hitlers arising.

C. C. P.

Kenneth Hare

KENNETH HARE has been praised by writers as different from him and from each other as George Moore, Sir Henry Newbolt and Edwin Muir, who said of two of HARE's long poems that they were "of a more perfect loveliness than any which have appeared in our time." But his name is still comparatively unknown. He was writing some of his finest poetry before 1914, and has been curiously uninfluenced by all that has taken place since. There is a happy mean between being tortured by one's times and being merely irritated by them, and if Mr. HARE had hit this mean his autobiography, *No Quarrel with Fate* (SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON AND CO., 15/-), would be more satisfying than it is. Heine once in his later years expressed the hope that he would never yield to the common weakness of old age and grumble at the present while over-praising the past. Mr. HARE is constantly exemplifying this weakness, and a hasty reader of this book could hardly fail to carry away the impression that its author approves the England of his youth because it was pleasant to be at Oxford in 1910, and disapproves the England of to-day because the unprivileged are becoming increasingly conscious of what they are missing. A more careful reader will realize, especially in the pages devoted to the author's childhood and boyhood, that Mr. HARE is a true poet, who sees the visible world with his own eyes and reproduces what he sees in his own language.

H. K.

The Village Bobby

Not only does the country policeman have to deal with a growing mass of administrative detail ranging from Animal Disease, Outbreak Of, to Water Supply, Beasties In, as well as his basic duty of checking misdemeanour from rear lights to murder, but if he is to be a success he must win the trust of his flock by a display of tact and impartiality which an ambassador might envy. That the job is no sinecure is made clear by Mr. LOUIS QUINAIN in *Country Beat* (METHUEN, 8/6), one of those refreshing books which find unsuspected excitement in an honest and humorous account of a simple way of life. In return for his zeal the village constable gets much good friendship, a wide knowledge of rural pursuits and ample opportunity, often supported by a gate and a quiet pipe, of observing nature in all her moods. As for his wife, the sole occupant for long periods of a police-station in miniature, she must be prepared for anything. Mr. QUINAIN is critical of police training for its devotion to theory at the expense of practice; and also of the great age at which magistrates are permitted to function. Altogether he is a keen champion of youth, and he may be right, but he should consider just what too much emphasis on it has done in Fascist and Communist countries. Without doubt the right man in the right place, he must certainly go on writing about it, for he is a perceptive countryman and

his book shows a real feeling for humanity and a natural skill in drawing character.

E. O. D. K.

"Through a Glass Darkly"

Mr. J. B. PRIESTLEY's new novel, *Bright Day* (HEINEMANN, 10/6), is not such happy reading as it sounds, and owes its title to a grim quotation, "It is a bright day that brings forth the adder." Because it is written in the first person and the hero is a young north countryman who turns from the wool trade to journalism and script writing for films, it is difficult not to regard it as autobiography, which, indeed, it must be in feeling if not in fact. We hear the unmistakable voice of Mr. PRIESTLEY speaking through Gregory Dawson in anger against the American war films—"Why should our people have had all this cheap muck dumped on 'em?" and we share in their dual quest for the "eagerness and warmth, enthusiasm and companionship that is still about if we know where to look for it." The story begins very nearly at the end when the script-writer, who has buried himself in a Cornish hotel to finish a job, meets people he knew when young and goes harking back through the years in search of his and their stories. The result is a commentary on life from before the last war up to the present time; and the wool trade and the film racket provide local colour. The characters (except for a few northerners and those killed in the first war) are not very happy or pleasant or easy to get on with, but they take fast hold of the story. The book reflects many moods and the last but one is a weary and national one, but the author's own exuberance and optimism creep into the last paragraph and make us feel a trifle easier.

B. E. B.

England and the Sea

One of the outstanding paradoxes of English literature is its comparative poverty both of prose and verse relating to the element which through so many centuries has been the nation's lifeblood. The passing of the age of sail in the early years of the present century brought forth, it is true, a spate of books on the subject of very varying merit; but in earlier times, and especially during the years when British sea power and British maritime trade were at their zenith, writers of the first water whose theme was the sea could almost be counted on the fingers of both hands. That being so, the difficulties facing the sea anthologist are very considerable, and Mr. CHRISTOPHER LLOYD, the compiler of *The Englishman and the Sea* (ALLEN & UNWIN, 7/6), may be congratulated upon the success with which he has handled a far from easy task. There are, indeed, some omissions as surprising as some inclusions. The most noticeable absentee of all is Defoe, undoubtedly the most effective recruiter for the sea services who ever existed. Conrad is represented, but not Kipling; and one would have liked to see the unforgettable passage from Hardy's *The Trumpet-Major* describing the passing of the *Victory*. The coarseness and brutality of the eighteenth-century sea writers, though it is bound to find a place in any collection of this kind, is perhaps a thought too lavishly represented; while some more of the early voyagers might have found a place here, especially that engaging old scoundrel, Captain George Shelvocke, whose narrative probably contained the germ of the most famous sea poem in the English language.

C. F. S.

MR. PUNCH welcomes the appearance of *Are Officers Necessary?* (ALLEN & UNWIN, 5/-), a collection of articles and stories by Mr. J. BASIL BOOTHROYD, most of which have appeared in these pages over the initials "J.B.B."

The Pipes of Peace

THE influence that poets have had upon the world was first debated by the Brains Trust a month or two back, and since then I have heard quite a bit of argument about it and about in less illustrious circles. Yet neither from the trustees themselves, learnedly though they talked, nor from my own acquaintances, deftly though I have steered their thoughts, has the one supreme example, the one perfect instance, had so much as a single mention.

It surely should have been obvious enough. Little more than a year ago there appeared in these pages a short set of verses, from the broken but exquisite cadences of which it might be gathered that I had smashed my last pipe and that I couldn't get any more. In the meantime a bare thirteen months have passed; food is as scarce as ever, clothing is even scarcer; yet what do we already see back in the shop windows? *We see pipes.* The only possible explanation is that the men in control put their weeping heads together and decided that at whatsoever cost, with whatsoever straining of the world's resources, somehow or other I had to have my pipes. There could be no more impressive tribute to the power of great verse.

My feelings towards the men in control should, I suppose, be only those of the purest gratification and goodwill. But I can't help wishing that they had arranged the details of the business a little more imaginatively. They might, for instance, have told me what they were going to do. When I first saw an Algerian birchwood in a window I couldn't know that two days later I should see a Palestinian cedarwood in another window; nor when I ran across

a shop displaying a Scandinavian walnut could I guess that round the corner was a shop displaying a Lithuanian pine. Still less was I to tell that my first breath-taking French briar was only the advance-party of a whole battalion of French briars due to follow immediately after. The result is that I now have great heaps of new pipes, hoards and stacks of them, vast unmanageable multitudes of them. And I am still buying them.

"But, surely," comes the interruption, "surely you must *know* how many pipes you want. Why couldn't you buy just so many and no more?" In the first place, my good sir, because I *don't* know how many pipes I want. All I know is that during that dark period of dearth my one coherent thought was that never again must I risk finding myself without a pipe. I don't know how long this miniature boom will last; I don't know how many more wars I shall see. And there is my duty to my posterity, for no issue of mine must go through what I have gone through. I don't know how many children I shall have; I don't know how many wars my children will see; I don't know how many children my children . . . In fact the only logical conclusion of this fatuous argument is that I ought *never* to stop buying pipes. The second objection is that by now I have become a collector. I cannot endure the thought that the man next door may own a Czechoslovakian broomwood while I do not. Besides, I am always hoping to discover that there is a set of the things, and then I shall be able to begin swapping, and all the sweetness of a cigarette-card-enriched boyhood

will come flooding back into my arid life.

It is the week-end at the moment, and I am having a rest from acquisition. But I am still not idle; I am smoking them in. Last week-end I smoked in Nos. 1 to 20, and this week-end I am hoping to reach No. 40. Twenty-eight is in position as I write, a vigorous Dutch elder, and I am not feeling as well as I have done. There are moments indeed when I almost regret the peaceful days before my poetic influence had made itself felt. My eye was tragic then, but it was not enfevered. My palate was wistful, but at least it remained uncharred. And my purse—oh, reader, reader, my purse, my poor, poor little purse!

M. H. L.

Remember June

REMEMBER June;
They say there's madness in the moon

That sails
In ever-broadening finger-nails
Across the starry sky.
The cuckoo crazy goes
And stammers out of tune,
The robin's waistcoat pales
Beside the rose.
Remember June;
Still, still the noon
And green the grass between the dusty rails.
O passers-by,
Toiling like snails
Along the wintry veins of hills and dales,
Remember,
You were born to hear the nightingales
In June. O. D.

Here ends Mr. Punch's Two



Hundred and Tenth Volume

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says OLD HETHERS

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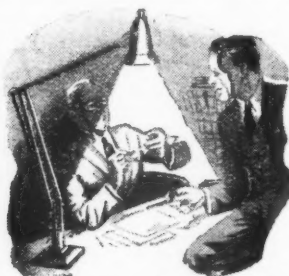
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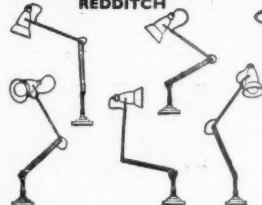
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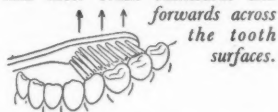
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How to brush your teeth

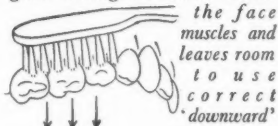
(THIS IS NO. 5 OF A SERIES. Cut it out and keep it.)

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strokes as shown.

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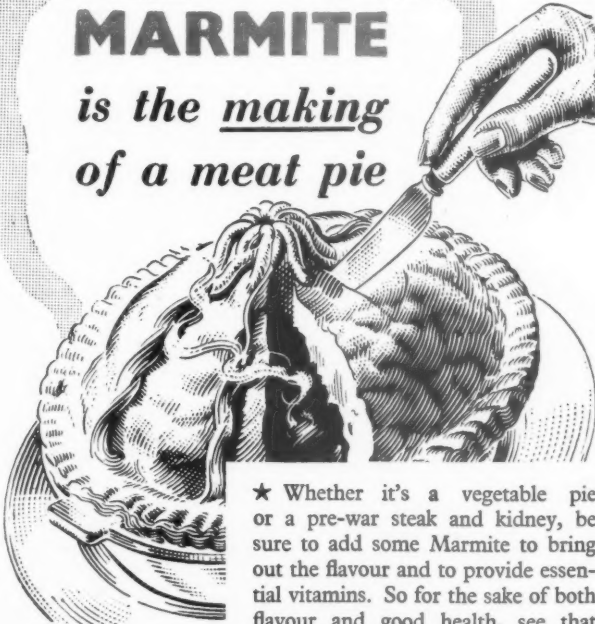


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an engagement
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Verb. Sap...

* From a letter to "The Motor"
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For town work I'd choose the Morris or British equivalent every time."

J. C. EVANS, CAIRO.

* Reproduction of one of the current Morris advertisements.

I've been all afternoon looking
at the finish on the post-war cars...



and I'm going to have a

MORRIS

MORRIS MOTORS LTD



COWLEY OXFORD



"Another Bouquet for Barneys"

(All Smokers' letters can be verified at
Barneys Bureau, 24, Holborn, London, E.C.1.)

March 12, 1946

Dear Sirs,

Another bouquet for Barneys, though you must have enough in all conscience! This time it comes from the focal point of Africa. Indeed I am wondering if it came from the East or the West, for the Atlantic and the Red Sea are about equidistant from here. Anyway, there it was in a native store in Buram of all places. A tin of genuine Barneys. I had been trekking for three and a half weeks with my Company of Sudanese Mounted Infantry of the Western Arab Corps. For the last ten days I had been tobacco-less. My first taste of this ambrosial stuff will remain one of the unforgettable experiences of my life. For it was in perfect condition: and so was I, after a fairly rigorous patrol over the waterless savannah of Southern Darfur. What a smoke!

Use this of course if you like. The tobacco deserves all the boost it rightly gets.

— Bimbashi,
S.D.F. M.E.F.

TRIBUTE TO
Barneys

Barneys (medium), Punchbowl (full), Parsons Pleasure (mild)
2/10½d. oz.

(290) MADE BY JOHN SINCLAIR LTD., BATH LANE, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE

